

HAPPY DAYS

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QUEEN VICTORIA.

BY ROBIN MERRY.

Our readers will be pleased to see this fine portrait of the late Queen. It is after

a photograph taken in 1877, and varies but slightly from the pictures taken more recently, the latter showing a little more definitely the marks of advancing age.

Victoria's rule over England reached over sixty-three years, and has been the best in the entire history of the country. Indeed, it is quite worthy of remark that the two most brilliant reigns in all English history are those of women, the other being that of Queen Elizabeth. In no period since the government began was the country marked by a more decided development or a greater prosperity than during the reigns of these two illustrious women.

The principles of democratic government have for some time past had decided growth in England, and the people, through the House of Commons and the extension of the franchise, or privilege of voting, have gained a large share in the government of the country. There are probably few people in England who desire the overthrow of royalty, though there are many who desire to take away the hereditary privileges of the House of Lords. It seems probable that in no great time some important changes may take place in this regard in the English Government; but so long as rulers are as wise and conservative as the late honoured Queen, there is little likelihood that an

elective system, like that of the United States, for instance, will take the place of that which has so long given stability to the British Government and throne, in the case of a certain noble lord occupying an important post in the Government, who, late one Saturday night, arrived at Windsor with some State papers for the Queen's signature.

"I have brought," said he, "for your Majesty's inspection some documents; but as I shall be obliged to trouble you to examine them in detail, I will not encroach upon your Majesty's time to-night, but will request your attention to-morrow morning."

"To-morrow morning!" repeated the Queen; "to-morrow is Sunday, my lord."

"True, your Majesty, but business of the State will not admit of delay."

"I am aware of that," replied the Queen; "and as, of course, your lordship could not have arrived earlier at the palace to-night, I will, if these papers are of pressing importance, attend to their contents after service to-morrow morning."

In the morning the Queen and her court went to church, and much to the surprise of the noble lord, the subject of the discourse was the sacredness of the Christian Sabbath.

"How did your lordship like the sermon?" asked the Queen.

"Very much, indeed, your Majesty," he replied.

"Well, then," added the Queen, "I will not conceal from you that last night I sent the clergyman the text from

which he preached. I hope we shall all be improved by the sermon."

Not another word was said about the State papers during the day; but at



THE QUEEN AND THE SABBATH.

The religious feeling of her Majesty was evidenced, soon after ascent to the